

JC20 Rec'd PCT/PTO 29 APR 2005

10

Claims

- 5 1. A data handling system for multi-user transactions comprising a central data processing device incorporating a data store structured in accordance with a predetermined progressive transaction involving cooperation between users, a plurality of data access interfaces for the device for the respective users with defined access privileges, at least some interfaces being read/write interfaces whereby data can be read from and written to the said store in relation to predetermined stages of the said transaction in accordance with the respective said privileges.
- 10 2. A system according to claim 1 wherein there are different said defined access privileges giving access to different data.
- 15 3. A system according to claim 1 or 2 wherein some define access privileges give access to shared data.
- 20 4. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 3 incorporating means for providing data output as hard copy documentation.
- 25 5. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 4 incorporating means for bidirectional exchange of said data with a separate user data handling system.
6. A system according to claim 5 wherein the user system comprises a hand held or mobile device.

WO 2004/042598

CT/GB2003/004687

11

7. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 6 structured for multiple said progressive job transactions.

5 8. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 7 when used for a said transaction which constitutes forwarding of a freight consignment between destinations passing through the hands of different intermediaries.

10 9. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 7 when used for a said transaction which constitutes a legal transaction related to the resolution of a problem with different parties working together.

15 10. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 7 when used for a said transaction which constitutes a public project related to construction work with different parties working together.

11. A method of tracking movements of freight consignments under the control of a plurality of separate parties wherein each freight 20 consignment has a respective set of data stored at a central data store, and each party has access to the data store for purposes of reading and writing to the data set in accordance with a respective set of permissions.